THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • FRIDAY • DECEMBER 8, 2023 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 40 • LATE CITY EDITION

READ SHARE FOLLOW
newindianexpress.com
facebook.com/thenewindianexpress twitter.com/newindianexpress
instagram.com/newindianexpress

CHARGESHEET FILED AGAINST VIVO BY ED IN MONEY LAUNDERING CASE

The Enforcement Directorate has filed its first chargesheet following a money laundering probe against Chinese multinational firm Vivo

VIVO-INDIA ADDED TO THE LIST OF ACCUSED

A complaint filed before a special court in New Delhi on Wednesday under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act named Vivo-India as an accused apart from four others who are already under arrest in the case. Those arrested are Lava International's MD Hari Om Rai, Chinese national Guangwen and chartered accountants Nitin Garg and Rajan Malik

MOBILE FIRM MADE WRONGFUL GAINS: ED

- The ED claimed in its remand papers before a court that the activities of the four accused enabled Vivo-India to make wrongful gains
- Besides, Grand Prospect International Communication, a company tied to Vivo-India, allegedly used forged identification documents and fake addresses at the time of its incorporation in December 2014 | P13

₹62,476 cr

WAS TRANSFERRED BY VIVO TO CHINA TO AVOID PAYING TAXES HERE, SAYS ED

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

BJP brass may take a call on 3 CMs by Sunday

Tough job for party in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh with multiple influential contenders lobbying for the hot seat

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR
@ New Delhi

AMID a day of intense speculation over who will be the chief ministers of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, many elected MLAs, including former Rajasthan CM Vasundhara Raje, met the top leadership of the BJP reportedly to lobby for the CM post.

With the hectic parleys still underway, party sources said the names of the three chief ministers will be known by Sunday. "How can anyone announce the names without appointing observers to states and without holding the legislature party meeting? The BJP goes by the book, not by hearsay. Wait by Sunday evening, almost everything will be clear as the central leadership is on the job," said a source.

Raje had reached Delhi late on Wednesday night, creating a buzz that she would meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, and BJP president J P Nadda on Thursday. For the record, however, Raje said she came to Delhi to meet a member of her family.

Renuka Singh, who on Thursday resigned as Union minister of state for tribal affairs, met Nadda and had a 30-minute discussion. The meeting sparked speculation that she is a strong contender for the Chhattisgarh CM post. Singh had contested from the Bharatpur-Sonhat constituency and won. Speaking to reporters, Singh, however, claimed that she was not in the race for CM. She belongs to a tribal community and holds immense influence. According to BJP sources, choosing her will help the party in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

The other names doing the rounds within BJP circles are former CM Raman Singh, who served Chhattisgarh for 15 years, and bureaucrat-turned-politician O P Chaudhary. Some BJP leaders feel Chaudhary has better chances as he is a strong OBC face and enjoys the trust of both Modi and Shah.

Meanwhile, Rajasthan MLA Mahant Balaknath Yogi also met senior BJP leaders in Delhi. According to party insiders, the BJP's central leadership has a tough job in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh with multiple influential contenders lobbying for the hot seat.

Apart from Raje, Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, and Arjun Meghwal are in the race in Rajasthan.

Notably, incumbent Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chauhan, who has developed a strong vote bank in the state, has chosen to stay back instead of rushing to Delhi to meet central leaders. Pralhad Singh Patel, Narendra Singh Tomar, Rajendra Shukla, and Jyotiraditya Scindia are the other contenders for the CM post in MP.

What happens next

The BJP is expected to name central observers for electing the leaders of its legislature parties in MP, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan on Friday. The observers will travel to the states to oversee meetings of newly elected MLAs, who will formally name the CMs

Telangana CM Revanth Reddy (left) and DyCM Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka greet the crowd after the swearing-in ceremony, in Hyderabad on Thursday | VINAY MADAPU

We are sevaks, not rulers, says new TS CM Revanth

B KARTHEEK @ Hyderabad

ANUMULA Revanth Reddy got going on day one by ensuring the dismantling of barriers placed in front of Pragathi Bhavan (the CM's official residence-cum-office that will now be called Praja Bhavan), a symbolic gesture that indicated his government would be transparent and accessible to the people.

On Thursday afternoon, in front of a massive gathering at LB Stadium in Hyderabad, Revanth was sworn in by Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan as the second chief minister of Telangana. The Governor also administered the oath of office to Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, sworn in as deputy CM, and 10 other Congress MLAs.

Top party leaders including Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi, AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah, Himachal Pradesh CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu and Karnataka DyCM DK Shivakumar attended the event.

After being sworn in, the CM signed two files — implementing the promised six guarantees and providing a job to Thumari Rajini, a differently abled person and MCom graduate.

Addressing thousands of his admirers, Revanth stressed, "We are not rulers but sevaks". He noted that with the establishment of "Indiramma Rajyam", people have got liberty and added that they will get social justice soon.

Cassation court to hear case of naval veterans

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

THE third hearing of the eight Indian naval veterans on death row in Qatar was held on Thursday in Doha in the Court of Appeal. The next hearing, which is expected within the next few days, will now be in the Cassation court.

A court of Cassation is a high-instance court, which is the highest court of appeal. Such courts do not re-examine the facts of a case, they only interpret the relevant law.

"The next hearing (in the Cassation court) will make things more clear. There is optimism after Prime Minster Narendra Modi met the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamas Al Thani, in Dubai on the sidelines of COP28 in Doha," said a source.

"We had a good conversation on the potential of bilateral partnership and the well-being of the Indian community in Qatar," Modi later posted on X.

December 18 is observed as Qatar's National Day. It is also a day when the Emir grants pardons to prisoners. Families of these veterans are hoping that these eight are pardoned by the Emir and repatriated.

Some family members of these naval veterans had filed a mercy petition seeking pardon of the Emir in the past.

Four days ago, Qatar had allowed the Indian ambassador there to meet the eight naval veterans in prison. The three hearings on the appeal so far were on November 23, November 30 and December 7.

K'taka saw 18,461 kids out of school in 2022-23

PURAN CHOUDHARY
@ Bengaluru

IN the last six years, 71,945 students in Karnataka have dropped out of school, according to data from the Primary School and Literacy Department. Despite various initiatives by the State and Union governments and the implementation of the Right to Education (RTE) policy, the State is in the 7th position for the highest number of dropouts in schools in the country.

Karnataka's dropout rate has worried experts who want the authorities to take proactive steps and organise larger awareness campaigns to bring children back to school. They also want the authorities to introduce an early warning system to predict possible dropouts.

As per the data provided by Samagra Shikshana Karnataka (SSK) under the Department of Education, during 2022-2023, 18,461 children dropped out. The highest number of 13,267 for the academic year was recorded for children in the age group of 6-14, who are mandated under the RTE Act. They include children who had either dropped out or never enrolled in school. The rest of 5,194 students were from 9,10 and PU grades.

According to Srikanth, State Project Officer, SSK, the study for 2022-2023 was conducted in January through the School Operation Survey with the help of teachers and the numbers available with the administration.

"Along with teachers, our officers also visit the brick factories, hotels, slums and other areas where children usually work. Post this, all of them are brought back to school."

"Replying to a question during the winter session in Belagavi on the initiatives taken by the government, Madhu Bangarappa, Minister for Primary School Education and Literacy, said that once students are found to be out of school, notices are issued to their parents and a deadline of one month is given to them to appear before the District Child Welfare Committee.

CONTINUED ON: P2

MYRIAD COLOURS

Yakshagana artistes perform outside the Suvarna Vidhana Soudha as part of 'Karnataka 50', a programme organised by the Kannada and Culture Department, in Belagavi on Thursday | EXPRESS

40% COMMISSION PROBE

Kempanna submits 6K pages of documents to Nagamohan Das panel

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

KARNATAKA Contractors' Association president **D Kempanna** and other office-bearers of the association on Thursday submitted 6,000 pages of documents to Justice Nagamohan Das Commission to substantiate their allegation of demand for 40% commission to clear the bills of contractors during the BJP rule in the State.

Addressing reporters, Kempanna said they also submitted documents in support of their allegation against the present Congress government. The Commission was set up in August to probe the 40% commission allegation against the previous government headed by Basavaraj Bommai.

Kempanna said they submitted documents related to bills and works in the Public Works, Irrigation, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj and other departments, and in BBMP limits in Bengaluru. He said some more documents will be submitted to Justice Nagamohan Das in the coming days as the association is waiting for RTI replies. "I cannot reveal details of the documents submitted to the Commission," he added.

Kempanna said earlier there was an allegation against him that he did not submit any proof to substantiate his charge against the previous government. "But now we have submitted 6000 pages of documents to the Commission," he added.

He said some documents show that the bills of some persons, who are not contractors, have been cleared.

Referring to the 40% commission charge against the previous government, Kempanna alleged that there is corruption in the present Congress government too. "Since this government is only a few months old, it is difficult to reveal the percentage of commission. Our association is not in favour or against any political party or government," he said.

Many hurdles to implement OPS: Minister

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

REVENUE Minister Krishna Byre Gowda on Thursday attributed the delay in the implementation of Old Pension Scheme (OPS) for state government employees to non-submission of a report by the committee formed for the purpose.

Replying to a query in the Legislative Council on behalf of CM Siddaramaiah, he said the committee constituted to look into the matter made no progress. The government is in a dilemma as it is likely to lose the Provident Fund money, which has been deposited.

Stating that reverting to OPS from the New Pension Scheme (NPS) is a tough task, he said the government, however, will implement it. The Congress party had promised to implement it in its election manifesto. The government is studying how to do away with the hurdles. Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh had decided to go back to OPS long ago, but they are yet to do so. The Rajasthan government has written to the Centre to withdraw the PF money it has deposited. Karnataka will follow suit, he said.

Byre Gowda said the committee will get more manpower to complete the study and submit its report.

Yalaberu is still a 'no network coverage' area

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Udupi

YALABERU, a remote village in Ajri gram panchayat limits in Kundapur taluk, is yet to get mobile connectivity. The reason for this is the village is in the midst of the Western Ghats. Surendra, a resident of this obscure village, said to make phone calls, people have to walk for about two km. The distance gets even longer for Internet access.

Some villagers said that they can access the Internet only if they go to Ajri, which is four km away from Yalaberu. For better connectivity, they have to travel 10 km further to Siddapur.

Sources said Shivamogga MP BY Raghavendra has initiated steps to ensure Internet connectivity in and around Byndoor as it comes under his Shivamogga parliamentary constituency. Though a tower of BSNL has been sanctioned, it is yet to be erected at Yalaberu.

There are around 70 houses at Yalaberu. Students from the village go to schools and colleges at Siddapura, Kundapura, Shankaranarayana and Koteshwara towns.

Raghavendra said 4G towers have been sanctioned to 25 places in Byndoor taluk. Work on erection of towers is on. A tower could not be erected at Yalaberu for want of a proper site. The connectivity issue will be addressed at the earliest, he added.

EXPRESS READ

SC's Article 370 verdict on Monday

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday will pronounce its verdict on pleas challenging the changes to Article 370. A five-judge bench headed by CJI DY Chandrachud had reserved the judgment on September 5 after a marathon 16-day hearing. One of the judges, Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, is retiring on December 25 | P9

State govt forms panel to probe Arjuna's death

Bengaluru: Coming under pressure from all quarters over the death of famed tusker Arjuna in Hassan, the State government has decided to constitute an expert panel committee to ascertain the cause of the death. It will seek a detailed report on the exact cause of death and who is accountable for it | P5

Tenant's daughter suffers burns as landlady throws chemical at her

PRAVEEN KUMAR @ Bengaluru

A 14-year-old girl paid the price for the fight between her mother and their landlady over some trivial issue in the city.

The landlady vented her anger at the girl by throwing some chemical on her right leg. The girl, who is a high school student, suffered 40% burns, and is now undergoing treatment at the Victoria Hospital's burns ward.

The victim has been identified as Umme Kulsum, daughter of Zakira Bhanu, 46, residents of Metro Layout in Chandra Layout police limits.

Bhanu told The New Indian Express that her family moved into the house seven months ago and they have been facing problems from the landlady since then. "She quarrels with us for silly reasons," Bhanu said.

She said the landlady also threw the chemical at her cats and other pets which entered the premises. She filed a complaint against the landlady, identified as Pooja Gowda, in Chandra Layout police station on Tuesday.

"We are fed up with the house owner's behaviour and want to vacate the house. But she is not returning our deposit money. We keep asking her to return the money, but she doesn't. She insists that we first vacate the house and collect the deposit money after a new tenant moves in," Bhanu said.

"We fear that she will never return our money. She makes an issue out of everything. She wants my daughters to accompany her wherever she goes. I am scared to send my daughters with her. The problem started after I refused to send my daughters with her. My daughter is unable to walk and is being treated in the burns ward of Victoria Hospital. I am not sure what kind of chemical she threw at my daughter's leg. My daughter returned home screaming for help," Bhanu said.

Meanwhile, the police have asked the complainant to furnish details regarding the treatment being given to her daughter. "We are not sure what kind of chemical was thrown at the victim. Even earlier, the victim's mother approached us seeking our intervention to help her vacate the house. The statements of the suspect have been recorded," said a police officer.

WITH THIS ISSUE
CITY'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE
INDULGE
40 PAGES, INCLUDING 24 OF INDULGE (TABLOID)